and the particular nature of the records offered there. The chapter was intended to introduce this present volume as well as *Intellectual Growth,* since the two together constitute a single study of the behaviour primarily of a particular group of children under particular conditions.

I there suggested that not only are such qualitative records an essential preliminary to fruitful experiment in genetic psychology, but that they may well remain an indispensable background and corrective, even when experimental technique is perfected. Without such a background of the total responses of children to whole situations, partial studies of this or that response to limited experimental problems may be no more than sterile and misleading artifacts.

The actual records of children's cognitive behaviour in *Intellectual Growth* established, I believe, the truth of this contention in the intellectual field. But the consideration holds good of social development even more profoundly. Experimental methods have in fact proved enormously fruitful in the study of intellectual growth, of learning and of language. But in the field of social development they are almost inapplicable. Most attempts to apply them have proved rather sterile. To study the moral development of children by asking for their judgments at different ages on a series of fables or of moral situations, for example, is to consider only one very limited aspect of the problem. To ask children what they think should be done in certain situations, or what they believe they themselves would do, is perhaps to learn something of their *ideas* of morality, but not of their *morality.* It is hardly even to study their ideas about it—but only such ideas as they dare to communicate. We can only study their effective morality in its spontaneous action in *real situations.*

The main development of technique in recent years among serious students of children's social life has been along the lines of *systematic observation.* Systematic observation has recently been defined by John E. Anderson, in his excellent discussion of *The Methods of Child Psychology,*[1] as " a technique . . . in which the observer selects beforehand from a mass of events which are occurring in the development of a child a particular event or series of events for observation, and develops a technique whereby

[1] *Handbook of Child Psychology,* £931, pp. 1-27.